

Information Technology Resource Management Council (ITRMC)

Meeting Minutes

(Approved by Council)

September 1, 1999

8:30 a.m. East Conference Room, Joe R. Williams Building
700 West State Street, Boise, Idaho

The September 1, 1999 meeting of the **Information Technology Resource Management Council** (ITRMC) was held in the East Conference Room of the Joe R. Williams Building, 700 West State Street, Boise, Idaho.

CALL TO ORDER, WELCOME

The meeting was called to order by **Pam Ahrens**, Council Chairman, who welcomed members and guests present. Ahrens noted the absence of Project Team Manager **Miles Browne**, due to medical reasons. She said the Council regretted his absence and wished him a speedy recovery.

ATTENDANCE

Members/Designates Present:

Ms. Pam Ahrens, Chairman
Senator Hal Bunderson, Idaho Senate
Mr. Eric Beck, Agency IS Representative
Rep. Randy Hansen, Idaho House
Mr. Ed Strickfaden, Public Safety Official
Dr. Gregory Fitch, State Board of Education
J.D. Williams, Elected Officer

*Mr. Keith Bumsted, Agency Exec. Officer

**Mr. Gary Broker, Health & Welfare

Absent Members:

Senator Clint Stennett, Idaho Senate
Mr. Raymond Sasso, Private Industry Rep.
Mr. John Peay, Judiciary Representative
Mr. Karl Kurtz, Agency Exec. Officer
Dr. Marilyn Howard, Supt. of Public Instr.
Ms. Cindy Siddoway, Rural Interests Rep.
Rep. Bert Marley, Idaho House
Mr. Dwight Bower, Agency Exec. Officer
Mr. Ken Harward, Local Government Rep.

**Designate*

***Guest Agency Exec Officer*

Others Present:

Mr. Rick Gerrard, U S West
Mr. Steve Stewart, Metamor
Mr. Ken Miller, The Idaho Statesman
Mr. Jeff Shinn, Dept. Financial Managemt.
Mr. Paul Jenkins, State Tax Commission
Ms. Connie Spofford, IIC
Mr. Rick Townsend, Y2K Consultant
Mr. Rob Spofford, IDWR
Ms. Carol Silvers, ISL
Mr. Greg MacMillan, Computerland
Mr. Phillip Kettraba, IPTV
Mr. Mark Little, Division of Purchasing
Mr. Laird Justin, SCO
Mr. Mike Fisher, Y2K Consultant
Mr. Rich Mincer, SDE
Mr. Brad Alvaro, Dept. of Correction
Ms. Nancy Szofran , OSBED
Ms. Marta Watson, DFM

Ms. Ann Heilman, DHR
Mr. Ron Row, IDOL
Mr. Steve Fowers, Sec. of State's Office
Mr. Roger Widner, Metamor
Mr. Steve Allison, Controller's Office
Mr. David Cooper, Dept. of Voc. Rehab.
Ms. Karen Rugg, Public Health District 2
Ms. Ira Larose, Public Health District 1
Ms. Myrna Osterhout, IDOL
Mr. Mark Morgan, Microsoft
Mr. Scott Beltz, Groundwork Consulting
Mr. Bill Farnsworth, Sec. of State's Office
Mr. Byron Keely, LHTAC
Mr. Platt Thompson, CRI
Mr. Joe Roche, Dept. of Administration
Mr. Jeff Rompala, ITRMC Project Team
Ms. Karen Bresnahan, ITRMC Project Team

MOTION TO APPROVE JULY 21 MEETING MINUTES

Dr. Gregory Fitch, State Board of Education, moved that the July 21, 1999 Minutes be approved. Representative Randy Hansen seconded the motion. Chairman Ahrens called for a vote and all seven members present voted to approve the Minutes. Council members Ken Harward and Ray Sasso e-mailed their votes of approval, completing the quorum of nine votes and the motion passed unanimously.

DIVISION OF HUMAN RESOURCES--IT SALARY ISSUES

Chairman Ahrens introduced **Ann Heilman**, Director of the new Idaho *Division of Human Resources*, to the Council. The ITRMC has been working aggressively over the past two years in the recruitment and retention of State IT Personnel, said Ahrens.

Heilman said the state is facing a tight budget year, which makes IT personnel recruitment very important. She has been working with the Departments of Administration, Financial Management, and Labor in a "team effort" to adjust IT salary packages. IT Salary recommendations are currently being finalized for the Governor and should be completed by October, 1999. The DHR is working to present compensation based increasingly on job descriptions, rather than pay grades, she said.

Heilman is working on ways to identify specific IT jobs that are "difficult" to recruit and retain, in order to suggest "alternate" pay schedules, which would be more competitive rates for those positions.

She asked for comments from the ITRMC regarding current salary issues, including the up-to-six thousand dollar bonuses, and invited Council members to suggest ideas for recruitment and retention.

Ahrens called for questions on the issue, and **Jeff Rompala**, Project Team, said he has learned through past experience that recruitment is a “full time process” necessitated by changes in the marketplace. He said today’s IT jobs are in high demand and require a constant effort to determine competitive salary rates. Rompalla said it is projected by 2003, that soon there will be thirty-two percent more jobs than people to fill them. **Mike Fisher**, Y2K Consultant to the Project Team, added that by 2003, it is estimated that there will be 1.3 Million new IT workers in the U.S.

Heilman revealed that the DHR has now devoted one full time employee to the task of recruiting. She said her department is planning to track data on the number and kinds of people who are applying for IT positions, and to study the percentage of IT employees who continue to work for the state.

Senator Hal Bunderson asked for a response from Heilman on what happens to salary levels for those positions in which a worker’s skills may become obsolete. She responded by saying the new HR structure allows the Departments of Administration, Labor and Financial Management to work as a cooperative team to resolve those kind of issues.

Governor Kempthorne has asked the DHR to work toward improving the coordination of training, while looking at job skills on an individual basis, through improved management of Idaho State personnel, she emphasized.

Bunderson asked how the DHR plans to interface their information with web-based skill training through the development of programs such as Western Governor’s University (WGU).

The DHR plans to change direction from a training “provider” to a training “coordinator” by bringing together trainers from all the state agencies in an attempt to share resources and avoid duplication of services. Along with this approach, she said state employees must realize it is “their responsibility to learn and grow and to be held accountable for upgrading their skills.” Some states are rewarding employees with bonuses for improving their skills, she added.

Representative **Randy Hansen** said private industry is currently working with Idaho’s universities to train for specific positions. Hansen inquired whether the state is utilizing the universities for the recruitment of potential state employees.

Heilman referred to university recruitment as part of a “future vision” of how to make a difference in the kind of people attracted to state agencies. **Establishing strong university connections** is one of the goals of the DHR, she said. “We will be working closely with state agencies and visiting the colleges and universities in order to participate in job fairs.” She also favors bringing high school students into state agencies for internships, as a means of teaching them the value of public service.

Hansen indicated that the state must compete with private industry, who has already taken the early approach, beginning at the junior high school level, so that by the time the individuals are freshman in college, they are already on a career path and taking specific courses desired by those companies. He said the state faces a “real challenge” with the issue.

Mike Fisher added that the Albertson’s Foundation has been developing training centers at the colleges and universities for Microsoft, Novell and Cisco Certified Trainers, in addition to those companies working with the high schools.

Chairman Ahrens said the Council looks forward to building on the good work that has already been done by the ITRMC on IT recruitment and working as partners with the Departments of Labor and Human Resources to further progress. She mentioned the recent utilization of newly designed newspaper ads which now highlight various positions currently available throughout the state.

DECISION TO DEFER ITRMC POLICY REVIEWS

Due to the absence of Project Team Manager Miles Browne, Chairman Ahrens announced that the scheduled *Policy Review* on the agenda **be deferred until the October 7, 1999** ITRMC meeting. Ahrens encouraged the Council to study copies of the ITRMC statute and policies provided to them during the interim.

IPTV REPORT, PETER MORRILL

As a follow-up to his presentation at the July 21, 1999 Meeting, **Peter Morrill**, General Manager of Idaho Public Television, brought before the Council a one page report *comparing* digital TV to the current analog system. Ahrens thanked Morrill for the report and there were no further comments.

Morrill also informed the Council on the status of a letter he was asked to write by **Senator Hal Bunderson** at the July 21, 1999 meeting. The letter requested that all six Idaho television stations be encouraged to collaborate on construction costs of a single, shared digital TV transmission tower on Deer Point.

After contacting the Idaho Digital Television Association, (IDTVA) which includes all six Idaho television stations, Morrill reported that the stations were *not interested* in using a single transmission tower with multiple antennas. **Based on extensive studies done in recent years, the broadcasters concluded that a jointly owned site was not feasible, and have chosen to upgrade their own current sites.**

Discussions are continuing, however, with cost saving efforts between KTVB (Channel 7) and KIVI (Channel 4) at the Deer Point Site, he said.

In addition, Morrill updated the Council on two items related to the digital conversion.

First, he recalled that in February 1999, IPTV was chosen as one of six “model sites” based on their *Digital Television Business Plan*. Representatives of the Ford Foundation and the other five television stations came to Boise in August, 1999. Television stations across the country will now use Idaho Public Television’s Digital Conversion Plan as a “template” to write their own plans. The Ford Foundation, which was instrumental in funding IPTV in the sixties, is now expressing an interest in increasing program funding, he said.

Secondly, Morrill mentioned that Idaho Public Television has become a *finalist* in a *Digital Planning Grant*, which would allow public television to interact with state agencies. The ITRMC wrote a letter of support for the IPTV grant in February, 1999. The grant is due to be awarded by the end of September, 1999.

Senator Bunderson asked Morrill to describe the elements of the *Digital Business Plan*. The Plan looks at the hardware and technical requirements and explores the “long-term sustainable aspects” of Digital TV, he explained.

Chairman Ahrens said the Council appreciated the follow-up report from Morrill and will look forward to hearing more about the Digital TV conversion process in the coming months.

Y2K UPDATE

On the Y2K Issue, Chairman Ahrens announced to the Council that **Governor Kempthorne** has responded to the *Y2K Mid-Year Report* with a letter **naming herself, Pam Ahrens as the State of Idaho Y2K Public Awareness Coordinator and appointing Miles Browne, ITRMC Project Team Manager, as Y2K Spokesman.** Council members were provided a copy of the letter from the Governor.

The **Y2K Mid-Year report**, which was submitted to the Governor's office on July 26, 1999, was accompanied by a letter written by the Project Team encouraging Kempthorne's *personal involvement* on the Y2K issue. Along with the report, *Public Information Proposals*, designed by a work group of major agency Public Information Officers, had recommended the appointment of a statewide coordinator and spokesman.

In further discussion of Y2K, Chairman Ahrens said the state is not anticipating any problems. "We have done everything possible to make sure that we are able to provide vital public safety and financial services, without disruptions," she said.

Greg Fitch, Department of Education, said it is a good idea to have the Governor step forward on Y2K public safety concerns.

Bunderson added that it is important right now to get a "reassuring" message to the Governor that the state is well prepared, so he can step forward and make a statement on what citizens should do. "We need to understand that Y2K has already happened, for the most part, with the start of the fiscal year on July 1st, without any noticeable breakdowns."

J.D. Williams agreed with Bunderson on sending a statement to the Governor, to reassure him on state readiness. However, Williams expressed a concern that agencies could be affected by breakdowns occurring in outside influences, such as the suppliers to public utilities.

Ahrens said Y2K has become less of a computer, technical problem and more of a concern about human nature... and the reactions of the public. The ITRMC will work in partnership with state agencies and the media representatives to assure that the transition to Y2K will happen in an orderly fashion, she explained.

Department of Law Enforcement, and Public Safety Official for the Council, **Ed Strickfaden** said **"There is no doubt...the biggest threat of Y2K is the over-reaction of the public. We need to be able to make sense out of non-sense."**

Eric Beck, Department of Labor, said the agencies are now encountering an increase in requests from individuals wanting to see status reports on Y2K preparedness. His department was recently visited by the U.S. Inspector General.

Gary Broker, guest agency executive representative from the Department of Health and Welfare, said the only thing he is concerned about is that the agency *Business Continuity Plans* are not all completed.

J.D. Williams noted that although the power companies have reported they are prepared for Y2K, they are somewhat dependent on their suppliers. Williams said he has been unable to get legislative approval for a backup generator for his department.

Jeff Rompala informed the Council that he is familiar with ways to rent backup generators as one possible option. Williams indicated the generator itself is not a big expense, but the wiring to install it is expensive.

Chairman Ahrens told the Council it will not be possible to foresee every difficulty, however, the state has done a great deal of work to prepare for potential Y2K related problems, with efforts that began early in 1996. State agencies have been preparing using a “**common sense approach**,” she said, in addition to the use of gradual budgeting processes in order to save tax dollars.

PROJECT TEAM STATUS REPORTS

❖ Status of Reminder Letter to Agency Directors on Business Continuity Plans

The Council heard a brief report from Project Team Member **Karen Bresnahan**, who reported that a *reminder letter*, as requested at the July 21, 1999 meeting, was sent to major agency directors on **August 27, 1999**. The letter included:

- ◆ **excerpts from** the Y2K Mid-Year report, including *Summary Points* and *Critical Project Status Reports*
- ◆ **a list** of state agencies who *have not* submitted their *Business Continuity Plans*
- ◆ **a sample** *State Employee Y2K Information Bulletin*, scheduled to be distributed with paychecks the second pay period in September 1999
- ◆ **a request for agencies** to inform the Project Team, as requested at the July 21 meeting, if they have had Y2K *Verification and Validation Audits* performed.

Bunderson asked about the content of the Continuity Plans and Bresnahan said it was a reminder to agencies to complete a *Business Continuity Plan*, which she indicated is not intended to be a report on how they plan to fix their computers, but a report outlining their agency’s ability to handle any Y2K related problems which might disrupt their daily business activities.

❖ Y2K “Countdown 2000” Public Awareness Media Campaign Begins

A press release was issued during the September 1, 1999 Meeting as the kick-off to a *Public Awareness Media Campaign* titled “**Countdown 2000**.” The news release, which was distributed to all major Idaho news media representatives, outlined Idaho State Government’s Y2K preparedness efforts and the issuance of the **Y2K Mid-Year Status Report**.

Other highlights of the news release included:

- ◆ Governor’s appointment of Ahrens, Y2K Coordinator; Browne, Y2K Spokesman
- ◆ statewide Y2K agency assessment, testing and remediation efforts, since 1996

- ◆ agency monitoring of 'Mission Critical' projects (financial or public safety concerns)
- ◆ Idaho's Top Ten Rating by NASIRE (National Association of Information Resource Executives)
- ◆ *Business Continuity Plans* required of all major state agencies
- ◆ Idaho's modest spending of 13 Million on Y2K, compared to other states
- ◆ Bureau of Disaster Services *Public Safety Committee*, monthly meetings
- ◆ Appointment of Y2K Coordinators in all 44 Idaho Counties
- ◆ Emergency Communications Center, operational by the end of 1999

The press release included a handout on **Y2K Resources**, including various Y2K Internet web sites. For a copy of the September 1, 1999 news release, contact the Project Team at 332-1876.

❖ Mission Critical Report

Rick Townsend, Y2K Consultant to the Project Team, presented the August, 1999 report to the Council regarding the status of "Mission Critical" Projects (those having financial or public safety impact). Townsend said progress continues to be made, with most agencies reporting at or near 100% on their Y2K assessment, testing, remediation and Business Continuity planning.

Many projects at the agencies are concluding well in advance of established deadlines, Townsend said. He noted the Department of Juvenile Corrections is installing a backup Unix Server, due to be completed by the end of October. Transportation has made good progress and is now 100% complete on all their systems, he said. PERSI will not be ready with their new system until the first quarter of the new year, so they are remediating their current system.

On a final note, Townsend indicated the Project Team is still waiting for information on how many of the agencies have completed *Validation and Verification Audits*, as requested at the July 21, 1999 meeting.

❖ Metamor Report

Townsend also gave the report on Metamor activities, which he said are winding down, which indicates the Y2K Projects they are involved with are at or near completion. Metamor has done a great deal of work at the request of state agencies. Health and Welfare still has a few areas to wrap up, he noted.

❖ Electronic Commerce Activities

Chairman Ahrens deferred a discussion on the *Idaho Electronic Commerce Plan*, due to the absence of Project Team Manager Miles Browne. The draft document for the EC Plan is still in the process of being revised by Browne and Jake Hoffman of the Tax Commission. She specified the importance that the EC Plan promote the goals of the Idaho Information Technology Plan.

❖ Microsoft Agreement

The Project Team is currently negotiating with Microsoft the development of an enterprise-wide license agreement pertaining to desktop and back office software. At the request of agency IT

managers, telephone service assistance is now being discussed as part of the plan. Project Team Member Jeff Rompala reported that the contract is still being developed and the agreement is due to be finalized by the October 7, 1999 meeting.

❖ Document Management

Rompala reported that (IIG) Impact Innovations Group was awarded the statewide contract and then later was subsequently purchased by **CBSI** (Corporate Business Solutions Incorporated). Project team member Rompala continues to work with Mark Little of Purchasing to get the document management contract moving.

❖ Project Team IT Analyst Position Open

Project Team Member **Phil Crook**, accepted a new job in the private sector, and vacated his *IT Analyst* position on August 14, 1999. The Project Team position has been advertised and approximately 30 resumes received. The process has been narrowed to twelve resumes and the position is expected to be filled sometime in October.

❖ Project Team GIS Position Still Open

A candidate was selected and an offer made for the **GIS** (Geographic Information Systems) position on the Project Team. However, the candidate declined to accept the position, due to financial and personal concerns with relocation, Rompala reported. The search now continues for another candidate, with the position expected to be filled by early October, 1999.

Council member Bunderson pointed out that the state should be sensitive to a candidate's needs, so that it would be difficult for anyone to turn down a position. Ahrens added that the position has been difficult to fill because it requires such specialized skills.

❖ Contracts and Services

Mark Little, Purchasing Department, reported on the current status of statewide Contracts and Services. He specified that contracts listed as ending in October are due to be extended. Little said the RFP for the *Access Idaho* Internet Services Contract is currently being finalized.

DISCUSSION ON DESKTOP LIFECYCLES

Rob Spofford, Department of Water Resources, presented a paragraph on *Desktop Lifecycles*, as was requested at the July 21, 1999 meeting. The paragraph is intended as a proposed change, which may be incorporated into the wording of *Idaho Information Technology Plan*. His paragraph read:

“Due to the extreme pace of change of information technology, ITRMC encourages agencies to pursue a three year replacement cycle or comparable leasing arrangement for the technology infrastructure listed above.”

Spofford said the current IT Plan does not have specific wording that encourages agencies to keep their software up to date. The statement would cover hardware as well as software, he said. “If you read the Mission Statement of the ITRMC, he said, you realize that in order to achieve our goals, it takes

up to date resources to make it happen.” The ITRMC Mission Statement reads as follows:

“ITRMC will develop and implement a comprehensive statewide information technology infrastructure to enhance the delivery of accurate, timely, and appropriate services for Idahoans while increasing their economic vitality.”

In the discussion that followed, Council member Bunderson asked how Spofford came up with the three year timeline. Spofford said he found it to be a commonly used date for upgrades. He pointed out the wording specifies “encourage” rather than “require” agencies to upgrade in three years.

Bunderson asked if the policy would include mainframe computers and Spofford said probably not, but it would most likely include upgrades for pieces and parts.

Greg Fitch, Department of Education, said he thinks the wording of the IT Plan should merely suggest agencies *remain current*, and favors the idea of moving obsolete equipment into the schools as one option.

Bunderson recommended the wording be reworked to emphasize agencies be encouraged to upgrade in order to enhance productivity, while removing the three year specification.

Chairman Ahrens suggested that Spofford rewrite the wording of the paragraph to reflect the Council’s ideas and submit the revised paragraph at the October 7, 1999 meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Ahrens called for new business, and Greg Fitch, State Board of Education, said he would like to introduce to the Council **Nancy Szofran** as the new **Chief Technology Officer** for his department. Fitch said he feels fortunate that Nancy chose to come to Idaho. Fitch reported that Szofran has been accepted by all the college and university deans. “She has been meeting and coordinating in ways we never thought possible,” Fitch emphasized. “She has brought warmth to technology.”

Nancy remarked briefly that she feels extremely fortunate to be in her new position and she noted, “I hope you are all aware of how special Idaho is....we’re doing unique and great things. My job is to help you and the universities succeed.” She added that Idaho was rated as number six of the top10 states in technology in an article published recently in PC Week On-Line Magazine.

ADJOURNMENT

Being there was no new business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned by Chairman Ahrens, at 10:30 a.m., until the next meeting scheduled for Thursday, October 7, 1999.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Bresnahan
ITRMC Project Team